

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm writing to you about Gisela Castro Medina's journey in sobriety. I'm an active member of Alcoholics Anonymous in the west metro with 37 years of sobriety. I'm Gisela's AA sponsor.

I met Gisela through a mutual acquaintance in April. She was sober and had been attending meetings in [REDACTED] for some time, but wanted to connect with a female sponsor. We soon started meeting on a regular basis and she asked me to be her sponsor. (An AA sponsor essentially acts as a mentor to an AA newcomer, reading the *Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous* with them, answering questions, helping them as they establish a sober way of life, and coaching them through the 12 steps.)

Gisela and I meet every week to talk and read. She attends several AA meetings each week, all around the metro, including the two I attend regularly. She volunteers to take on tasks such as leading, reading, and setting up for meetings—i.e., being of service to others. She demonstrates an understanding of the disease of alcoholism and a willingness to listen and to do what she needs to do to stay sober. She has shared much of her background and trauma with me, as well as her work toward becoming a more independent and resilient young woman.

But most important, she has stayed sober. She celebrated one year of sobriety in August and has now been sober for 16 months. She has transformed from a very scared young woman to one determined to hold on to her sobriety and herself.

Given what she has lived through and the uncertainty she has lived with for the past year, the fact she has stayed sober is nothing less than a miracle. It's been my privilege to witness many miracles in AA, and Gisela is one of them. I hope she can continue her journey in sobriety—without incarceration or interruption.

If I can help in any way, please let me know.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]